

**POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR THE USE OF THE
CONTRACTOR-ISSUED GOVERNMENT TRAVEL CHARGE CARD**

A. DEPARTMENTAL POLICY

The use of the contractor-issued Government travel charge card is **mandatory** for all Departmental employees who travel on official business, unless an exemption has been granted. The use of the card is limited to expenses incurred incident to officially authorized Government travel. Use of the card at or in the vicinity of the official duty station or residence is **strictly forbidden** unless its use is in connection with officially ordered travel. Personal and family member use of the card and purchases made in retail stores are also **strictly forbidden**. However, common or shared services or facilities (i.e., rooms, meals, etc.) with family members or business associates may be charged to the card while on official business. This does **not** apply to common carrier transportation tickets. **Only** your official portion of the charged expense may be claimed on the travel voucher.

Possession and use of the card does not relieve the employee from observing rules and regulations governing official travel, including use of Government city-pair contract carriers, American-Flag carriers, or Travel Management Centers (authorized travel agents under contract with the Government).

Neither bureau managers, charge card coordinators, nor any other bureau officials have the authority to override the contractor's corporate policy regarding suspension or cancellation of employee accounts, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES

The following offices and individuals have direct responsibilities for monitoring the use of the contractor-issued Government travel charge card:

1. Office of Administrative Services, Office of Administrative Operations. The Office of Administrative Services will:
 - (a) Issue and interpret Departmental policy and procedures on the use of the charge card.
 - (b) Conduct periodic on-site reviews of the bureaus' oversight of charge card activities including a review of bureau written procedures and files maintained by the charge card coordinator.
 - (c) Monitor the bureaus' compliance with guidelines in disciplining employees who abuse their charge card privileges.

2. Departmental bureau and operating unit officials. Appropriate officials in Departmental bureaus and operating units will:
 - (a) Develop internal written bureau/operating unit procedures that will establish guidelines for the appropriate bureau/operating unit managers to follow in monitoring the use of the charge card by cardholders to ensure appropriateness of expenditures and the timeliness of payments. Bureau/operating unit officials will be responsible for determining the appropriate managers that will be delegated this authority.
 - (b) Designate an employee and an alternate to act as the bureau's/operating unit's APC who will administer the Government charge card program for their bureau/operating unit.
 - (c) Ensure that all employees in your bureau or operating unit who perform official travel are issued the card, unless an exemption has been granted.
 - (d) Sign (or designate the employee's immediate supervisor) to sign the certification block on the Employee Acknowledgment Statement (Appendix B to this Exhibit).
 - (e) Review the monthly reports issued by the contractor and notify the employee's immediate supervisor of any questionable or inappropriate charges and/or delinquencies of 60 days or more in the payment of accounts.
3. Employee's immediate supervisor. The employee's immediate supervisor will:
 - (a) Notify the employee of any questionable or inappropriate charges and/or delinquencies and give the employee the opportunity to explain the charge or delinquency. A record shall be maintained of the notification and the explanation received from the employee.
 - (b) Take the appropriate disciplinary action if the explanation is inadequate. The supervisor shall contact the bureau's/operating unit's servicing human resources office, who will consult with the OGC as needed, for a determination of the appropriate disciplinary action that shall be taken. DAO 202-751, Appendix B, contains useful guidance on selecting a penalty appropriate to the offense. Disciplinary action that may be taken ranges from written reprimand to removal from the Federal service. At the discretion of the supervisor, the card may be revoked at this time.
 - (c) Revoke the card if there is a second instance of inappropriate use or insufficient explanation for the delinquency. Appropriate disciplinary action, as recommended by the servicing human resources office and in consultation with OGC, shall also be taken. Disciplinary action that may be taken includes written reprimand to removal from the Federal service.

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- (d) Provide the APC with the card for cancellation when it has been revoked because of inappropriate use or delinquency.
 - (e) Notify the APC when an employee is transferring between offices within a bureau/operating unit or between bureaus/operating units within the Department.
 - (f) Retrieve the charge card from the employee and return it to the APC for cancellation when an employee leaves, retires or transfers to another Government agency.
 - (g) Assure that the appropriate bureau official signs the designated box on the CD-126, Clearance of Employee Account- ability, (or equivalent form) when the employee leaves the Department.
4. Agency Travel Program Coordinator (APC). The bureau/operating unit employee and alternate designated by the appropriate official in their bureau/operating unit as APCs to administer the charge card program for their respective bureau/operating unit will:
- (a) Provide the contractor/card issuer with the names of the coordinator and alternate, bureau/operating unit name, mailing addresses and telephone numbers. Also, provide this information to the Departmental Coordinator, OAS, OAO.
 - (b) Provide eligible employees requesting a card with an application form and a copy of this Exhibit.
 - (c) Ensure completeness of employee information on the employee card account application, that the employee has completed and signed the Employee Acknowledgment Statement included as Appendix B to this Exhibit, and that the approving official/supervisor has also signed the Acknowledgment Statement.
 - (d) Complete sections designated for agency information and authorization on the employee card account application. (Refer to Appendix A of this Exhibit.)
 - (e) Forward the original of the application to the contractor by fax or mail. If the card is needed immediately, the APC shall notify the contractor to send the card by express delivery to the employee's home or office address.
 - (f) Maintain a central file of the signed Employee Acknowledgment Statements along with a copy of the employee's application for all employees who are current cardholders.
 - (g) Review the monthly charges and delinquency reports and notify the appropriate bureau manager(s), employee's immediate supervisor, or the employee, in accordance with established bureau/operating unit procedures, of possible misuse or delinquencies of 60 days or more.
 - (h) Maintain monthly charge and delinquency reports for a one-year period before they are destroyed.

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- (I) Notify the contractor to cancel the card when notified that an employee's card has been revoked by the supervisor because of inappropriate use or delinquency.
 - (j) Notify the contractor when an employee transfers between bureaus/operating units within the Department. The APC of the losing bureau should notify the contractor and the APC of the gaining bureau.
 - (k) Notify the contractor in a timely manner to cancel the card when an employee leaves, retires or transfers to another Government agency.
5. Employees. Employees who are eligible to receive the charge card will:
- (a) Complete the employee information on the charge card account application and sign the application (see Appendix A for completion instructions).
 - (b) Complete and sign the Employee Acknowledgment Statement (Appendix B of this Exhibit) acknowledging that they have received, read, and understand these policies and procedures related to the use of the contractor-issued travel charge card which states that the card shall be used only while on official travel and not for personal use or use at or in the vicinity of the official duty station or residence unless the use is related to approved official travel. Obtain the signature of the approving official or immediate supervisor on the Employee Acknowledgment Statement.
 - (c) Forward the above two documents to their APC for processing. If the coordinator is unknown, call the Departmental Coordinator in the OAO at (202) 482-1818.
 - (d) Agree to the terms and conditions of the contractor's Government Card Services Travel Program Cardholder Account Agreement that is received with the card.
 - (e) Observe the following guidelines regarding the security of the card:
 - (1) Exercise the same care and responsibility for the security of the card and number as he/she would with a personal charge card. The card will be sent to the employee's home address.
 - (2) Exercise security of the card by not allowing a secretary, administrative or executive officer, or supervisor to store or keep the card.
 - (3) Exercise caution and care in giving the card number to another employee to make travel arrangements on their behalf and when giving signature-on-file authorizations (see Appendix C of this Exhibit) to Travel Management Centers (TMC) (authorized travel agents under contract with the Government).
 - (f) Obtain cash advances from automatic teller machines (ATMs) using their travel charge card in lieu of receiving advances from the imprest fund or from the finance office. Cardholders will be issued Personal Identification Numbers (PIN)

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by the contractor. If an employee does not receive a PIN, does not remember the PIN, or wishes to change the PIN, he/she should call Citibank at 1-800-790-7206, toll free in the Continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, or Canada, or collect at 904-954-7850 outside these areas to receive a form that should be completed and submitted to Citibank. Employees should contact their APC to find out what the established weekly withdrawal limits are for their bureau. If the limit will not meet the employees needs, it can be increased on a case-by-case basis. Employees must contact their APC to request an increase. Cardholders will be charged an ATM transaction fee of 1.25% of the amount withdrawn which is reimbursable as a miscellaneous expense on the travel voucher.

For ATM locations, call 1-800-CITIATM. In lieu of using the ATM, employees may use their card to obtain cash from a teller in any bank bearing the Visa logo.

(g) Submit their travel vouchers to their designated payment office within five (5) working days after the completion of travel. In most cases, employees will be reimbursed for their expenses before payment is due to the contractor.

(h) Comply with the following guidelines and procedures regarding the payment of the monthly charge card bills:

(1) A monthly billing statement from the contractor/card issuer will be sent to the employee's home address. A statement will be issued when expenditures are incurred or when a credit is posted to the account. If a statement is not received, the employee should contact Citibank at 1-800-790-7206 in the Continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, or Canada, or collect at 904-954-7850 outside these areas.

(2) Payment, in full, is due and payable to the contractor upon receipt of the statement but must be received by the contractor no later than 25 calendar days from the closing date on the statement in which the charge appeared. **The employee is personally liable for all charges which have been incurred, regardless of whether they exceed the amount reimbursable under Department travel regulations.**

(3) Conform with Employee Responsibilities and Conduct, 15 CFR 0.735-16, **which requires** DOC employees to pay each just financial obligation in a proper and timely manner. Corrective actions (cancellation of the card and/or disciplinary action) may be taken by the employee's supervisor if the employee fails to pay the bill in a proper and timely manner or uses the card for non-official purposes. Department Administrative Order (DAO) 202-751 contains penalty guidelines for disciplinary action which ranges from written reprimand to removal from Federal service for violation of this conduct standard.

(4) If the charge card bill contains a disputed charge, it is the employee's responsibility to contact the contractor (Citibank) at 1-800-790-7206 in the continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, or Canada,

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or collect at 904-954-7850 outside these areas. The contractor will need to know the following:

- Employee's name and account number
- Reference number of the disputed charges
- Establishment where charge was incurred
- Amount of charge
- Statement date

With this information, research can generally be conducted within a few days to resolve the problem.

(I) Notify his/her APC when he/she is transferring between bureaus/operating units within the Department. This notification is necessary in order for internal management reports and mailing addresses to be kept current. A new card will not be issued when the employee transfers within the Department. The APC of the losing bureau should notify the contractor to transfer the card and also notify the APC of the gaining bureau.

(j) Return the card, cut in half, to his/her supervisor or the APC for cancellation when leaving, retiring, or transferring to another Government agency. If the coordinator is unknown, call the Departmental Coordinator in the OAO at (202) 482-1818.

6. The contractor/card issuer. The contractor/card issuer will:

(a) Issue a charge card in the name of the employee upon receipt of a properly authorized application.

(b) Mail the charge card directly to the employee's home address within three (3) working days of receipt of the application from the coordinator. If the card is needed immediately, it will be delivered to the employee's home or office by express delivery.

(c) Mail monthly billing statements to the employee's home address when expenditures are incurred or when a credit is posted to the account.

(d) Prepare and forward monthly reports (account activity, delinquency, suspension, cancellation, or other special reports as requested by the bureau) to the APC.

(e) Notify the APC before suspending or canceling an employee's card because of nonpayment of his/her account by sending pre-suspension and pre-cancellation reports.

(f) Follow the suspension and cancellation procedures contained in paragraph C. below for notifying cardholders when their accounts become delinquent.

(g) Cancel the charge card immediately upon notification from the APC for those

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employees who have retired, left the Department, or whose card has been revoked by a supervisor.

(h) Forward an account renewal report to the APC at least 90 days prior to the expiration of each account. The APC will notify the contractor of those accounts that should not be renewed.

(I) Renew the card every two-years from the date of issuance, unless the employee is delinquent in the payment of his/her account or the bureau manager determines that the employee no longer needs the card.

C. SUSPENSION AND CANCELLATION PROCEDURES

1. Suspension Procedures. The contractor will notify the cardholder when payment for the undisputed amount of the account has not been received 45 days from the closing date on the billing statement in which the charge appeared. If payment has not been received 55 calendar days from the closing date, the cardholder and the APC will be notified that suspension procedures will be initiated. The cardholder's account will be suspended if payment for the undisputed amount has not been received 61 calendar days from the closing date, unless directed by the APC. Upon payment of the undisputed amount, the account will be reinstated.
2. Cancellation Procedures. If payment of the undisputed amount has not been received by the contractor 120 calendar days from the closing date on the billing statement, the contractor will notify the cardholder and the APC that cancellation procedures will be initiated. The account will be canceled 126 days from the closing date on the billing statement, unless otherwise directed by the APC. The employee will be charged a late fee of 2.5% per month on the entire undisputed balance until payment is received. If the employee's account is canceled at this time, their accounts may be reported to the national credit bureaus.
3. Reinstatement of Canceled Accounts. At the discretion of the contractor, canceled accounts may be reinstated upon payment of the undisputed amount, including late fees. The contractor may conduct a credit worthiness check prior to reinstatement of a canceled account. Employees may also be charged a reinstatement fee.

C. TRAVEL PROCEDURES

1. Authorization, Advances, and Vouchers.
 - (a) All official travel must be authorized on Form CD-29, Travel Order, or other authorized form. In order to obtain common carrier transportation at the Government discount fare, a copy of the approved travel order must be presented to the ticketing agent at the time payment is made for the ticket.
 - (b) It is **mandatory** that cardholders use their charge card to obtain cash

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advances from automatic teller machines (ATMs) or directly from a bank bearing the Visa logo instead of receiving advances from the imprest fund or the finance office. Cash advances should be limited to the meals and incidental expense rate (M&IE) for the location of the temporary duty location and other cash expenses that are expected to be incurred that cannot be charged. Travelers shall charge common carrier transportation, lodging, meals (where possible), rental of automobiles, and gasoline and other automobile related expenses on their contractor-issued Government charge card.

- (c) An employee may use his/her charge card to obtain common carrier tickets from the airlines or TMC. Charging tickets more than a week in advance should be avoided unless it is necessary to obtain a discount fare. Otherwise, a situation may develop where an employee receives his/her charge card bill for the ticket prior to receiving a reimbursement check for the travel.
- (d) Department policy **requires** the employee to submit a properly prepared and approved CD-370 Travel Voucher, SF-1012 Travel Voucher, or other authorized form to the designated payment office within five (5) working days after the completion of travel. The cost of common carrier transportation purchased with the individually-billed charge card shall be itemized on the travel voucher. The original passenger ticket coupon for common carrier transportation (plane, bus, train) must be attached to the travel voucher. Claims for transportation must be limited to the amount of the ticket used and should not include any unused portion of the ticket. Adherence to this policy will ensure that the employee receives reimbursement from the Department in sufficient time to pay the charge card bill.

2. Unused Tickets.

- (a) If a transportation ticket purchased with the employee's individual contractor-issued Government travel charge card is completely unused, the ticket and passenger coupon should be returned to the TMC or airline representative by the employee and a refund credit receipt should be obtained. This receipt should be retained until the appropriate credit is issued on a subsequent billing statement. The employee **shall not** submit his/her unused ticket purchased with his/her individual charge card to the bureau payment office with the travel voucher.
- (b) If a transportation ticket purchased with the employee's individual contractor-issued Government travel charge card is partially used, the unused tickets and passenger coupon shall be returned to the TMC or airline representative by the employee and a refund credit receipt should be obtained. Copies of the passenger coupon (if available) along with the charge and refund credit receipt slips must be submitted with the travel voucher in order to obtain reimbursement for the cost of the partially used

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ticket.

- (c) If the transportation charge appears on the charge card statement, but the credit does not, immediate credit can be received in the following way:
 - I. Subtract the amount of the credit from your payment.
 - ii. Send a copy of the refund credit receipt with the payment to the contractor/card issuer.
 - iii. The contractor/card issuer will monitor the account and take whatever steps are necessary to obtain the credit. The cardholder will be advised of the final resolution.
- (d) Transportation tickets purchased on the Government Travel Account (GTA), a centrally billed account established with the travel charge card contractor and a Travel Management Center (TMC), or a Government Transportation Request (GTR) shall be returned to the appropriate bureau payment office to obtain a credit to the employee's appropriation code which was charged with the original ticket.

3. Lost Tickets.

- (a) Most carriers will attempt to reissue a ticket according to their individual procedures. Employees should explain their ticket loss to the ticket agent and request a replacement ticket. Most carriers will comply if boarding passes have not already been issued against the lost ticket and if the employee can produce proper identification and a copy of his/her travel orders. However, if an replacement ticket cannot be provided, the employee will need to purchase a new ticket using their individual contractor-issued Government travel charge card and file a Lost Ticket Application immediately with the office location where the original ticket was purchased.
- (b) To obtain a credit on the charge card statement, a copy of the Lost Ticket Application should be submitted following the procedure in 2(c) above.
- (c) If the original ticket was partially used, a copy of the Lost Ticket Application should be submitted with the travel voucher, along with the charge slip. Employees may be personally responsible for the cost of the lost tickets and for any Lost Ticket Application service charges.

4. Charges Made in Foreign Countries.

Charges made in foreign currency will be converted into U.S. dollars. The conversion rate used will be at least as favorable as an interbank rate or, where required by law, an official rate. This rate shall be the one in existence at the time the transaction is processed. Amounts converted by common carriers such as airlines will be billed at rates the carriers use.

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E. LOST OR STOLEN CARDS

Employees shall report lost or stolen contractor-issued Government travel charge cards **immediately** to the contractor, even if the card number is not known. Call Citibank at 1-800-790-7206, toll free in the Continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico or Canada, or collect at 904-954-7850 outside these areas.

The employee is not liable for any fraudulent charges if the card is lost or stolen provided they promptly notify the contractor/card issuer. The employee will be required to review any charges considered fraudulent and sign an affidavit of forgery stating he/she did not make the charges. All charges will be the employee's responsibility should he/she refuse to sign the affidavit.

A replacement charge card will be issued within 24 hours of notification, if the card has been lost or stolen in the United States, and within 48 hours of notification abroad. The card will be mailed to the cardholders billing address and should arrive in 7-10 days after the loss has been reported. If the employee is traveling and needs a card replaced immediately, the contractor will work with the employee to identify the best replacement option.

F. EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

Under the terms of its contract with the General Services Administration, the contractor/card issuer **may not**:

(1) Conduct credit checks on employees designated to receive Government charge cards, unless specifically requested by a Federal agency.

- (2) Release credit information to other than authorized employing agency officials or the individual cardholder.
- (3) Sell or otherwise provide employee names or addresses to other commercial interests.
- (4) Charge membership or interest.
- (5) Include commercial advertisements or other forms of solicitation with monthly billing statements.
- (6) Issue or cancel employees' cards without notifying the Agency/Organization Program Coordinator (APC).
- (7) Hold employees liable for any charges made with lost or stolen cards, provided the employee notifies the contractor/card issuer promptly upon discovering that his/her card has been lost or stolen and signs an affidavit, if required by the contractor/card issuer, stating he/she did not make the charges.

G. PRIVACY ACT NOTICE

The following information is provided to comply with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a):

The information requested on the card application form is collected pursuant to Executive Order 9397 and 5 U.S.C. Chapter 57 (as amended) for the purposes of recording travel expenses incurred by the employee and to claim entitlements and allowances as prescribed in DOC Travel Handbook. The purpose of the collection of this information is to provide Government agencies necessary information on the GSA travel card contract which provides travelers with charge cards for official travel and related expenses, attendant operational and control support, and management information reports for expense control. Routine uses which may be made of the collected information and other account information in the system of records entitled *Travel Charge Card Program GSA/GOVT-3* are as follows:

- (1) transfers to appropriate Federal, State, local, or foreign agencies when relevant to civil, criminal, administrative, or regulatory investigations;
- (2) pursuant to a request of another Federal agency in connection with hiring, retention, issuing a security clearance, reporting an employee investigation, clarifying a job, letter or contract or issuing a license, grant, or other benefit;
- (3) to a Member of Congress or to a Congressional Staff Member in response to an inquiry of the Congressional Office made at the request of the individual about whom the record is maintained;
- (4) to officials of labor organizations when necessary to their duties of exclusive representation;
- (5) to a Federal agency for accumulating reporting data and monitoring the system; (6) GSA contract travel agents assigned to agencies for billing of travel expenses;
- (7) listing, reports, and records to GSA by the contractor to conduct audits of carrier

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charges to the Government; and

(8) any other use specified by GSA in the system of records entitled *Travel Charge Card Program GSA/GOVT-3*, as published in the Federal Register periodically by GSA.

The information requested is not mandatory. Failure to provide the information will nullify the application, and a charge card will not be issued to the employee.

APPENDIX A

**Instructions for Completing the Contractor-Issued
Government Travel Charge Card Application Form**

Employees should contact their Agency/Organization Program Coordinator (APC) to obtain a charge card application form. If the APC is unknown, call the Departmental Coordinator in the Office of Administrative Services on (202) 482-1818.

SECTION I - INSTRUCTIONS

This section contains the general instructions.

SECTION II - CARDHOLDER INFORMATION

These blocks must be completed by the employee. The information shall be written above the line requesting the information. The employee shall include their full name, bureau/operating unit name, verification information (mother's maiden name), social security number, home and business mailing addresses and phone numbers, E-mail address, fax number, and circle "yes" for City Pair Program. The lines for "4th Line Embossing" and "Discretionary Codes" and "Master Accounting Codes" are left blank. The APC will complete these if they are required by the bureau/operating unit.

**SECTIONS III - REPORTING PARAMETERS, IV - AUTHORIZATION
PARAMETERS, AND V - PLASTIC TYPE**

These sections will be completed by the APC.

SECTION VI - CARDHOLDER SIGNATURE

The employee must sign and date the application form and provide it, along with the signed Employee Acknowledgment Statement (Appendix B of this Exhibit) to their APC.

**SECTION VII - AGENCY/ORGANIZATION PROGRAM COORDINATOR
SIGNATURE**

The APC will sign the application form and forward it by fax or mail to the contractor. The APC will maintain a copy of the application along with the Employee Acknowledgment Statement.